

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1177

C 104 L 23

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating a missing and murdered indigenous women and people cold case investigations unit.

Sponsors: House Committee on Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry (originally sponsored by Representatives Lekanoff, Orwall, Reed, Berry, Ramel, Callan, Doglio, Timmons, Walsh, Reeves, Chopp, Duerr, Gregerson, Taylor, Wylie, Stonier, Pollet, Davis, Kloba and Ormsby; by request of Attorney General).

House Committee on Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry

House Committee on Appropriations

Senate Committee on Law & Justice

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

In 2022 the state established the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Task Force (MMIWP Task Force) in the Office of the Attorney General (AGO) and directed the MMIWP Task Force to review the laws and policies pertaining to missing and murdered Indigenous women and people and submit related recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. The MMIWP Task Force's recommendations included establishing and fully funding a cold case investigation unit within the AGO with a focus on cases involving missing and murdered Indigenous women and people.

Summary:

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Cold Case Investigations Assistance Unit (Unit) is created within the Office of the Attorney General (AGO), subject to appropriation, for the purpose of assisting federal, municipal, county, and tribal law enforcement agencies with solving cold cases involving missing and murdered Indigenous women and people. The Unit may proactively offer assistance to a law enforcement agency with primary jurisdiction over a missing or murdered Indigenous women or person cold

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case, but the Unit may not investigate or assist with an investigation except at the request of the agency, in which case the assistance must be limited to the content of such request. The Unit must prioritize assistance to jurisdictions that do not have sufficient resources to investigate cold cases. The Unit must include an advocate or case navigator.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 0

Senate 48 0

Effective: July 23, 2023